

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the above-identified application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Status of the Claims

Claims 1, 2 and 5-22 are pending in this application, of which claims 1, 10 and 16-19 are independent. All of the pending claims stand rejected. By this amendment, independent claims 1, 10 and 16-19 are amended. No new matter has been added by this amendment.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 1-2, 7, 8, 10, 13 and 16-19 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over U.S. Pat. No.: 6,157,706 to Rachelson ("Rachelson") in view of US 2002/0075524 to Blair *et al.* ("Blair") further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,633,399 to Fukazawa ("Fukazawa")¹. Claims 5, 12, 14 and 15 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Rachelson in view of Blair further in view of Fukazawa further in view of U.S. Pat. No.: 6,658,456 to Shimoosawa ("Shimoosawa")². Claim 6 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Rachelson in view of Blair further in view of Fukazawa and further in view of U.S. Pat. No.: 6,721,783 to Blossman *et al.* ("Blossman")³. Claims 9 and 11 have been under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) rejected as allegedly being unpatentable over Rachelson in view of Blair further in view of Fukazawa and further in view of U.S. Pat. No.: 6,883,016 to Fujii *et al.* ("Fujii")⁴. Claims 20-22 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Rachelson in view of Blair further in view of Fukazawa and further in view of U.S. Pat. 6,356,356 to Miller *et al.* ("Miller")⁵.

Independent claims 1, 10 and 16-19 have been amended for further clarification.

¹ Paragraph four (4) of the Office Action.

² Paragraph five (5) of the Office Action.

³ Paragraph six (6) of the Office Action.

⁴ Paragraph seven (7) of the Office Action.

⁵ Paragraph eight (8) of the Office Action.

With the features of the present invention as recited in the amended claims, if an image is received by a fax machine, an electronic mail is transmitted to all of users who share the fax machine. Accordingly, each user who shares the fax machine can receive the fax-received image via a PC set at his/her own place even if he/she does not directly go to the place of the fax machine to confirm whether the image has been received. Moreover, the present invention is further characterized in that a reception format can be designated for each user so as to fulfill the user's preferences regarding by which file format he/she wishes to receive the image.

Applicants believe that none of the cited references teaches these aspects of invention discussed above. In particular, the receiver in Rachelson, Blair and Fukazawa, is essentially only one. That is, there is no such situation in the cited references in which a single fax machine is shared by plural users as required by the present invention.

Applicants believe that no other cited references (i.e., Shimoosawa, Blossman, Fujii and Miller) show or suggest this aspect of present invention as discussed above.

Accordingly, each of claims 1, 10 and 16-19 as amended is believed neither anticipated by nor rendered obvious in view of the cited references (i.e., Rachelson, Blair, Fukazawa, Shimoosawa, Blossman, Fujii and Miller), either taken alone or in combination, for at least the reasons discussed above.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of claims 1, 10 and 16-19 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) is respectfully requested.

Applicants have chosen in the interest of expediting prosecution of this patent application to distinguish the cited documents from the pending claims as set forth above. However, these statements should not be regarded in any way as admissions that the cited documents are, in fact, prior art. Also, Applicants have not individually addressed the rejections of the dependent claims because Applicants submit that the independent claims from which they respectively depend are in condition for allowance as set forth above. Applicants however reserves the right to address such rejections of the dependent claims should such be necessary.

Applicants believe that the application as amended is in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested.

AUTHORIZATION

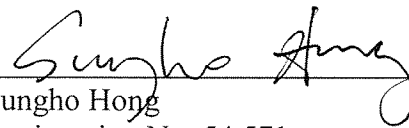
No petitions or additional fees are believed due for this amendment and/or any accompanying submissions. However, to the extent that any additional fees and/or petition is required, including a petition for extension of time, Applicants hereby petition the Commissioner to grant such petition, and hereby authorizes the Commissioner to charge any additional fees, including any fees which may be required for such petition, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 13-4500 (Order No. 1232-4792). A DUPLICATE COPY OF THIS SHEET IS ENCLOSED.

An early and favorable examination on the merits is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,
MORGAN & FINNEGAN, L.L.P.

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By:


Sungho Hong
Registration No. 54,571

Correspondence Address:

MORGAN & FINNEGAN, L.L.P.
3 World Financial Center
New York, NY 10281-2101
(212) 415-8700 (Telephone)
(212) 415-8701 (Facsimile)